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TEACHER TRAINING AND THE CLASSICS.

BY- REXINE, JOHN E.

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DESCRIPTORS- *PRESERVICE EDUCATION, *LATIN, *SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS, *TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS, *TEACHER CERTIFICATION, AIRLIE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON THE CLASSICS,

WITH THE STUDY OF MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES FAR OUTSTRIPPING THE STUDY OF LATIN, IT BEHOOVES LATIN TEACHERS TO REVITALIZE THEIR TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS. MORE SPECIFICALLY, NEW PROGRAMS SHOULD REFLECT THE IDEAS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF JAMES B. CONANT, THE PLANS OF FIVE EXPLORATORY PROGRAMS IN TEACHER PREPARATION INITIATED BY THE N.Y. STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, AND THE GUIDELINES IN TEACHER COMPETENCIES ESTABLISHED BY THE MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA. THE FIRST AIRLIE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON THE CLASSICS, IN APRIL 1965, TOOK A HELPFUL STEP IN THIS DIRECTION BY RECOMMENDING THAT A COMMITTEE OF CLASSICISTS SET UP CERTIFICATION STANDARDS FOR LATIN TEACHERS COVERING PROFICIENCY IN THE LANGUAGE, KNOWLEDGE OF ROMAN HISTORY AND CIVILIZATION, PROFICIENCY IN SUCH RELATED FIELDS AS ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY OR GREEK, AND THOROUGH GROUNDING IN TEACHING METHODS, MATERIALS, AND TECHNIQUES. THIS ARTICLE APPEARED IN "CLASSICAL WORLD," VOLUME 59, NUMBER 8, APRIL 1966. (GJ)

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TEACHER TRAINING AND THE CLASSICS*

Dr. James B. Conant, perhaps more than any other single individual, has done substantial service in bringing to the attention of the American public the situation and problems facing the American high school today and the preparation of the American high school teacher.[1] No matter what you personally may think of Dr. Conant's views,[2] he has sought to improve the lot of the American high school teacher by clarifying both what his preparation should be and what his activities and responsibilities should be.

In his book *The Education of American Teachers* we find recommendations made on the basis of a piercing survey of the American high school situation as a whole. Most of these are no doubt familiar to you but I shall ask your indulgence in reviewing those requiring the action either of a chief state school officer, a State Board of Education or a Legislature because these have, at least in a few well publicized cases, been dramatically implemented:[3]

Certification requirements

"For certification purposes the state should require only (a) that a candidate hold a baccalaureate degree from a legitimate college or university, (b) that he submit evidence of having successfully performed as a student teacher under the direction of college and public school personnel in whom the state Department has confidence, and in a practice-teaching situation of which the state Department approves, and (c) that he hold a specially endorsed teaching certificate from a college or university which, in issuing the official document, attests that the institution as a whole considers the person adequately prepared to teach in a designated field and grade level.

Programs of practice teaching

"The state should approve programs of practice teaching. It should, working cooperatively with the college and public school authorities, regulate the conditions under which practice teaching is done and the nature of the methods of instruction that accompanies it. The state should require that the colleges and public school systems involved submit evidence concerning the competence of those appointed as cooperating teachers and clinical professors.

State information service

"State Departments of Education should develop and make available to local school boards and colleges and universities data relevant to the preparation and employment of teachers. Such data may include information about the types of the teacher-education programs of colleges and universities throughout the state and information concerning supply and demand of teachers at various grade levels and in various fields.

Assignment of teachers by local boards

"The state education authorities should give top priority to the development of regulations insuring that a teacher will be assigned only to those teaching duties for which he is specifically prepared, and should enforce these regulations vigorously."

Certification reciprocity among states

Whenever a teacher has been certified by one state under the provisions of the recommendations made herein, his certificate should be accepted as valid in any other state.

In the next section Conant makes his recommendations about collegiate or university responsibility (the president will certify that the candidate is prepared to teach a certain subject on a certain level and the institution establishes in conjunction with a public school system a state-approved practice-teaching arrangement); insists upon the all-university approach to teacher training; requires spelling out of the future teacher's program; and proposes the establishment of clinical professors. There are many other interesting proposals but we shall have to forego them here at least for now.

The Conant challenge was last year accepted by the State whose Education Department and system Dr. Conant considers the most enlightened and intelligent, though by no means without inadequacies. Commissioner Allen, in turn, called upon five New York State Colleges and Universities to come up with plans for teacher preparation that they would use if the State Education Department were to free them

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* Excerpts from a paper delivered at the Second Annual Meeting of the Classical Association of the Empire State, Albany, N.Y., Oct. 29-30, 1965.

1. Cf. James B. Conant, *Shaping Educational Policy* (1965); *The Education of American Teachers* (1963); *Slums and Suburbs* (1961); *The American High School Today* (1959).

2. [For a *mise-en-point* of Dr. Conant's position on the study of Latin, see B. W. Weatherby, "J. B. Conant on the Study of Latin," *CW* 54 (1960-61) 49. New readers will be agreeably surprised to learn that Dr. Conant's position is by no means one of hostility to our subject.—ED.]

3. *The Education of American Teachers* (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, Inc., 1963), pp. 210-211. Mark P. O. Morford has worked out Conant's clinical professor idea for Latin in his "The Classics and the Clinical Professor: A Transatlantic View," *Classical Journal*, Vol. 61, No. 1 (Oct. 1965), pp. 13-15.

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entirely of State certification requirements but plans and programs that would be in the spirit of the "Conant Report." The institutions involved, Brooklyn, Colgate, Cornell, Fredonia, and Vassar, constitute "The Five College Plan" group and worked intensively and independently, with Dr. Conant and with the State Education Department, with themselves, with the schools, and with others for almost an entire academic year before a total plan or program was presented to the State and then to a private foundation for support. This experimental group is now in a position to put its various programs for teacher preparation into operation with a $300,000 grant for the next two years from the Danforth Foundation and an appropriate sum from the State Education Department. No plan is identical with any other but there are similar features in all. No institution was compelled or urged to follow Dr. Conant's book literally. Only two guidelines were asked for, at least by Conant, who acted as consultant to the State Education Department, through the Carnegie Foundation: that the institution involved in the program of teacher preparation prove an all-university concern for such and that the President of the institution be willing to stand behind his faculty in certifying the teacher candidate as prepared under whatever program the faculty devised and approved.

This is not the place to go into the details of each institution's program but it should be noted that ony one institution, as far as I know, was willing to get involved in Foreign Language Teacher Preparation (French, in this case) and that was my own, admittedly under some pressure from your speaker. No institution, though at least one of the five has the resources, would consider the preparation of Latin teachers under this program. This, of course, does not mean that the institutions do not or will not prepare Latin teachers but rather for various reasons (financial and personnel resources being the primary ones), prefer that such teachers be certified in the normal fashion. This attitude, I am sorry to say, seems to me universal. Though there is a real need for creative and well thought out programs in teacher preparation for Latin high school teachers, such programs are scarce and where they do exist, they are small. My impression is that the national preparation of such teachers is scattered, small, and uninspired. There are, of course, notable exceptions.

As a reminder to those of you who may have forgotten, The Modern Language Association has prepared and endorsed a set of "Standards for Teacher-Education Programs in Modern Foreign Languages"[4] that list the seven competencies of (1) listening; comprehension; (2) speaking; (3) reading; (4) writing; (5) applied linguistics; (6) culture and civilization; (7) professional preparation, and the requirements of each competence in the superior, good, and minimal categories. The New York State requirements[5] are clearly based on these standards and it is becoming increasingly clear that it is the profession that has agreed upon these standards and upon their imposition upon teacher preparation programs throughout the country. The standards are hardly disputable and are sufficiently flexible so that teacher preparation programs can use them as guidelines.

No such guidelines now exist on a national level for teachers of the classics. It may serve some purpose to rehearse the New York State standards for minimum competence in Latin. Five competencies are listed: (1) speaking, (2) reading, (3) writing, (4) language analysis, and (5) culture. Under these areas the following are the standards for the provisional and the permanent certificate respectively:[6]

1. *Provisional.* The ability to read Latin aloud with good pronunciation, phrasing and expression.

Permanent. Same as for provisional plus the ability to read Latin poetry aloud at sight, giving proper attention to the principal metres of the great poets.

2. *Provisional.* The ability to translate prose and poetry of the Golden Age to idiomatic English.

Permanent. The same as for the provisional with the addition of early Latin plays and the literature of the Silver Age.

3. *Provisional.* The ability to write Latin of average difficulty with correctness and use of idioms.

Permanent. The same as for the provisional.

4. *Provisional.* A working knowledge of the common Latin roots as seen in the familiar Romance languages and in English. A command of language patterns and a knowledge of the main differences from English.

Permanent. A working knowledge of the main features of the development of the common Romance languages and of the important contributions of Latin to English.

5. *Provisional.* A knowledge of the geography and history of ancient Rome and of the influence of its literature, art, and culture on civilization.

Permanent. Insight into the mores of the Romans

4. *PMLA*, Part II, September 1964.

5. Cf. "Amendment to Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, Pursuant to Section 207 of the Education Law," p. 18.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

and the ability to relate their problems to those of the present day.

No doubt many New York State and other teacher training programs in Latin would meet these standards but how is another question.

It has now been over forty years since the publication of the monumental *Classical Investigation Report* of 1924 and classicists nationally as a profession have been long overdue in re-assessing their field and teacher preparation in the classics for the modern space age.[7] Fortunately, under the leadership of Professor John F. Latimer of George Washington, with a grant from the U.S. Office of Education, the First Airlie House Conference on the Classics was held (April 14-17, 1965). I have seen only the summary report that appeared in the May 1965 issue of *The Classical World* (271-277) and the work of *The Classical Investigation* is duly acknowledged and used.[8] In the teacher education section I read the following:

I. Basic Resolutions: The Committee resolved that there be established by a committee of Classicists in consultation with appropriate agencies and institutions a proficiency examination for the certification of Latin teachers.

II. The Committee recommends that this proficiency be ascertained by a series of examinations, the content of which should be as follows:

1. . . . that there be a question to determine the student's ability to read and comprehend Latin prose and poetry at sight;

2. . . . that there be a question to determine the student's ability to translate and interpret passages from a common core of standard Classical works.

We recommend that the multiple choice method not be used for testing questions [1] and [2].

3.a. . . . that there be a question to determine the student's knowledge of the history of Classical Roman Literature;

3.b. . . . that there be a question to determine the student's knowledge of Roman History and Civilization;

4. . . . that there be a question to determine a candidate's knowledge of methods and materials.

5. . . . that there be a question to determine a candidate's proficiency in two of the following special fields: (a.) Art and Archaeology, (b.) Classical Heritage, (c.) Greek (elementary grammar and elementary reading), (d.) Greek History and Civilization, (e.) Latin Composition, (f.) Linguistics, (g.) Modern Languages.

III. The Committee recommends that the professional preparation of the Latin teacher should include: (a.) a knowledge of the sources and uses of teaching materials, (b.) the evaluation of various teaching methods, materials and techniques, (c.) instruction in lesson planning and test construction and scoring, (d.) observation and student teaching.

IV. The Committee recommends that regional centers, travel-study programs, and other means of professional improvement be provided for teachers of Latin, and that sources of support therefore be solicited.

V. It is the sense of this Committee that the implementation of its recommendations and those of the conference as a whole be commended to the American Classical League.

The above are, of course, not the only recommendations that are important for teacher training in the classics but they provide some idea of the thinking of the Committee along with the other sections on "The Role and Relevance of Classical Education Today;" "Classical Curricula in High School (Including Grades 7 and 8) and in College and Their Proper Articulation," and "Instructional Methods and Media." A significant beginning toward national discussion of the issues and answers has been inaugurated and it is none too soon. The profession, instead of leading, has been lagging behind the modern languages,[9] whose Association's four staff members in 1930 have grown to 44 in thirty years. Membership has jumped from 3,658 in 1930 to 20,000 in 1965. Activities at Four Washington Place, in addition to the publication of the *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association* and arrangements for the annual meeting, include the following:

1. The Center for editions of American authors;

2. Three contracts with the U.S. Office of Education for statistical surveys;

3. Two testing contracts with the Office of Education for the MLA cooperative foreign language tests for secondary school students and for the MLA foreign language proficiency tests for teachers and advanced students in French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish;

4. A foreign language institute evaluation program;

5. A teacher preparation program;

6. An English institute materials center;

7. For evidence that *The Classical Investigation* is frequently referred to but not often read, see Lillian B. Lawler's note in "The Forum", *Classical Journal*, Vol. 61, No. 1 (Oct. 1965), pp. 15-16.

8. [Readers should now consult also the fuller presentation in the official report, *Planning Conference to Examine the Role of Classical Studies in American Education*, etc. (Co-operative Research Project [Office of Education] No. V-005, John Francis Latimer, Project Director [Washington, D.C.: George Washington University, 1965]). Cf. *CW* 59 (1965-66) 134f.—Eds.]

9. The information below has been gathered from John T. Harmon's "The Modern Language Association, Programs and Services", *Modern Language Journal*, Vol. 49, No. 6 (Oct. 1965), pp. 363-366.

7. A foreign language materials center and a publications center.

Ironically, it is now the MLA, founded in 1883 as a protest against domination by the classical languages, that has entered into contract with the Office of Education under NDEA, Title VI, to gather current enrollment figures in languages in high schools and colleges. MLA will pay out of its own funds to survey enrollments in Greek and Latin! Why didn't the profession survey its own needs and resources?

We need a statistical survey of the profession as a whole[10] (which we are presumably getting from the *MLA*). We need a much greater interest on the part of colleges and universities in the work of the high schools and we need the cooperation of college professors of the classics in teacher education programs. We need institutes for retraining teachers of Latin and Greek on the same financial basis as practically all other subjects. We need to practice what we preach and be willing to look at and experiment with new methods and techniques. At a time when attacks on the classics are being renewed with increased vigor (cf. "Et Tu Professor," *Boston Daily Globe,* Sunday, Oct. 3, 1965), we need the development of better (much better) public relations with the mass media, with state and Federal governmental agencies, with the schools and college administrators, with educational publications, with the public. We need to shudder in horror when John T. Harmon can say that "gathering statistics on the classical languages is not a justifiable expenditure of national defense funds."[11] God help this country if it should reach the stage where it has forgotten its classical roots and rejected its classical heritage. The teacher of the classics needs to remind America that there is no one more concerned for the American educational ideal of excellence than he and that there are few "area studies" that can provide the enriching experience of the study of Greece and Rome.

Kenneth Mildenberger, Director of Programs of the Modern Language Association, in his banquet address at the Northeast Conference on "The Consequences of Prudent Affluence" challenged his colleagues in modern languages to show a concern for the whole of American education:

> It seems to me that this affluent profession must begin to exercise a conscience about the whole of American education, or at the very least it should be deeply concerned about some related parts of education other than modern foreign languages. May I suggest to each of you one profitable area of personal investigation, and if you are so moved, action—and you need not stray far from home base. I have in mind the "Case for Latin," which is a committee topic at this meeting, under the chairmanship of William R. Parker, who, incidentally, is not a Latin teacher. Probably because of other preoccupations, too many of us have become thoughtlessly infected with a habit of scoffing at Latin, just as much of the educational world only recently scoffed at modern foreign languages. The latest MLA studies reveal that Latin in the schools is no longer holding even its very modest position. And in the colleges it fights a sad, rear guard action. What will your affluent profession gain if it silently permits one of the wellsprings of the tradition of Western man to disappear from American education? What will it lose?[12]

Some serious and urgent work remains to be done.

COLGATE UNIVERSITY JOHN E. REXINE

10. I am aware that a number of local limited surveys have been made.

11. *Op. cit.* (see Note 9), p. 365.

12. Published in *MLJ*, Vol. 49, No. 6 (Oct. 1965), p. 353.

REVIEWS

Ursula Schoenheim, Book Review Editor

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

of *The Reporter* and *Horizon* offers a judicious distillation of Greek civilization from the Bronze Age to the legacy of our own day.

The text, rich in anecdote and legend, always interesting, and replete with modern analogies and nuances, incorporates the latest findings of scholars and archaeologists. The classicist may cavil at unwarranted generalizations, occasional romanticization, and the presentation of apocryphal but titillating details of the private lives of ancient worthies as gospel truth. One regrets the author's overconfidence in Robert Graves' authority, the appearance of a few inaccurate handbook clichés, and the misspelling *deux ex machina*. His self-conscious style is periodically marred by the blending of archaisms and conceits with leavening dashes of popular journalese redolent of *Time*. However, his assessments are mostly valid and his critical perceptions acute.

The magnificently-produced picture portfolios drawn from vase-paintings, sculpture, reliefs, architecture, and the landscape offer more than the orthodox fare. The special features include chrono-